

The Invention Claimed Is:

1. A method of gathering semiconductor wafer edge inspection data, wherein a review tool captures images of the semiconductor wafer, comprising:
 - providing a semiconductor wafer;
 - generating a map of points of interest proximate to an edge of the semiconductor wafer;
 - supplying the points of interest to the review tool in automatic succession;
 - instructing the review tool to capture images at the points of interest;
 - automatically storing the captured images; and
 - correlating the captured images with the points of interest.
2. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising:
 - identifying the points of interest with location identifiers for fake defects at the points of interest.
3. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising:
 - generating context information for the captured images identifying the semiconductor wafer; and
 - correlating the captured images with the context information.
4. A method as defined in claim 3 wherein the review tool is incorporated in a semiconductor fabrication system having a plurality of fabrication stations for performing fabrication steps on the semiconductor wafer, the review tool is situated subsequent to a preceding one of the fabrication stations, and the aforementioned context information is first context information, further comprising:
 - generating second context information for the captured images
 - identifying the preceding fabrication station; and
 - correlating the captured images with the second context information.
5. A method of gathering semiconductor wafer edge inspection data, wherein a review tool captures images of the semiconductor wafer, comprising:
 - providing a semiconductor wafer;
 - generating points of interest proximate to an edge of the

5 semiconductor wafer by identifying fake defects with fake defect identifiers;
causing the review tool to capture images at the points of interest by
instructing the review tool to capture the images at the fake defects identified by
the fake defect identifiers; and
storing the captured images.

6. A method as defined in claim 5 wherein the review tool captures
images of the semiconductor wafer through a view finder and can drive the view
finder to an identified defect location, further comprising:
supplying the fake defect identifiers to the review tool; and
5 instructing the review tool to drive the view finder to the fake defects
identified by the fake defect identifiers and to capture images at the fake defects.

7. A method as defined in claim 6 further comprising:
correlating the captured images with the points of interest according
to the fake defect at which each captured image was captured.

8. A method as defined in claim 5 further comprising:
generating context information including information identifying the
semiconductor wafer; and
correlating the captured images with the context information.

9. A method of gathering semiconductor wafer edge inspection data,
wherein a review tool captures images of the semiconductor wafer, comprising:
providing a semiconductor wafer;
generating context information including information identifying the
5 semiconductor wafer;
generating a map of points of interest proximate to an edge of the
semiconductor wafer;
instructing the review tool to capture images at the points of interest;
storing the captured images; and
10 correlating the captured images with the points of interest and the
context information.

10. A method as defined in claim 9 further comprising:
storing the context information in a computer-searchable manner.
11. A method as defined in claim 9 wherein the review tool is
incorporated in a semiconductor fabrication system having a plurality of fabrication
stations for performing fabrication steps on the semiconductor wafer, the review
tool is situated subsequent to a preceding one of the fabrication stations, and the
5 aforementioned context information is first context information, further comprising:
generating second context information for the captured images
identifying the preceding fabrication station; and
correlating the captured images with the second context information.
12. A method as defined in claim 9 wherein the semiconductor wafer
edge inspection data is gathered by a software tool, further comprising:
the software tool instructing the review tool to capture the images at
the points of interest; and
5 the software tool correlating the captured images with the points of
interest and the context information.
13. A method as defined in claim 12 wherein the review tool is
incorporated in a semiconductor fabrication system having a plurality of fabrication
stations for performing fabrication steps on the semiconductor wafer, the review
tool is situated subsequent to a preceding one of the fabrication stations, and the
5 aforementioned context information is first context information, further comprising:
generating second context information for the captured images
identifying the preceding fabrication station; and
the software tool correlating the captured images with the second
context information.
14. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge
comprising:
a review tool having an image capturing device capable of capturing
an image of the semiconductor wafer edge;
5 a software tool connected to the review tool to supply instructions to

the review tool to capture an image at a point of interest on the semiconductor wafer edge and to receive the captured image from the review tool; and

10 a database connected to the software tool to receive and store the captured image from the software tool and context information identifying the semiconductor wafer, the context information being correlated with the captured image.

15. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge as defined in claim 14 wherein:

the review tool is capable of capturing the image at a predetermined defect location;

5 the point of interest is indicated by a predetermined fake defect location identified by a fake defect identifier;

the instructions supplied from the software tool to the review tool include the fake defect identifier; and

10 the review tool captures the image at the predetermined fake defect location.

16. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge as defined in claim 15 wherein:

the review tool is capable of driving the image capturing device to the predetermined defect location; and

5 the review tool drives the image capturing device to the predetermined fake defect location identified by the fake defect identifier in order to capture the image at the predetermined fake defect location.

17. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge as defined in claim 15 wherein:

5 the context information correlated with the captured image includes the point of interest according to the predetermined fake defect location at which the captured image was captured.

18. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge as defined in claim 14 for use in a fabrication system having a plurality of fabrication

stations including a preceding fabrication station, wherein:

5 the review tool is situated in the fabrication system subsequent to the preceding fabrication station; and

 the context information further identifies the preceding fabrication station.

19. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge as defined in claim 14 wherein:

 the database, including the context information, is computer-searchable.

20. A system for automated inspection of a semiconductor wafer edge as defined in claim 14 wherein:

5 the instructions supplied from the software tool to the review tool include a plurality of points of interest at which the review tool captures a plurality of images in automatic succession; and

 the software tool automatically receives and stores the captured images in the database correlated with the context information for each image.